**Basics of Article One of the Constitution**

**The Legislative Branch**

The legislative (law making) power of the United States is in the hands of Congress, which is made up of two bodies, The House of Representatives and the Senate.

* All legislative (law making) power in placed in the hands of Congress, which is made up of two separate groups, the House of Representatives and the Senate.

**The House of Representatives**

* + Each member must be at least 25 years old and is up for re-election every 2 years
  + Representation for each state is based on a state’s population (currently each member of the House of Representatives represents about 650,000 people, and each state must get at least one, meaning there are currently 435 members of the House of Representatives)
  + You live in the 6th Massachusetts Congressional District and Democrat John Tierney is your representative.
  + All bills for raising revenue (money) must start here
  + Has the power to impeach members of the Executive Branch, which means that they decide that there is enough evidence that a crime has been committed to have a trial for removal from office in the Senate. (**Impeachment does not mean removal from office)**

**The Senate**

* + Each member must be at least 30 years old and is up for re-election every 6 years.
  + Representation is equal, each state has two senators regardless of population.
  + Your U.S. Senators John Kerry, a Democrat, and Scott Brown, a Republican.
  + The Vice-President of the United States is the President of the Senate, but votes only to break ties
  + All trials for impeachment occur in the Senate, and a two-thirds (2/3) majority is necessary for conviction
  + Have the power to approve all treaties, with a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote
  + Have the power to approve Presidential appointments, but only with a simple majority (50% +1) vote

**Some of the Powers of Congress**

* + To collect taxes
  + To regulate commerce (trade/business) between the United States and other nations and between the states.
  + To declare war
  + To raise and support an army and navy (but not to command it)
  + “To make all laws which shall be **necessary and proper**” for the running of the government (This is the **Elastic Clause**)